

Maybe once in every 50 years a country gets a chance like we have now, where the economy's doing well, the social indicators are improving, there's a lot of national self-confidence, there's no overwhelming threat to our security abroad or crisis within. The world will never be free of problems. But once in 50 years you get in shape like this, where you can really imagine what you want the future to be like for your children and grandchildren and then go out and build it.

We ought to be elated to have this election. It should have nothing to do with personal attacks. We should posit that our opponents are good people who love their families and love their country and will do what they believe. But we have to make sure people know that what we believe and what they believe on critical things are different, and the consequences are profound.

When Al Gore says in his speeches that you ain't seen nothing yet, I know it may sound like a political slogan. But I'm not running for anything, and I believe that. I believe the best is still out there. I believe that you have no idea where the information revolution, where the biotechnology revolution, and where the globalization of not just commerce but societies are going to lead us.

And the children in this audience can live in the most peaceful, prosperous, exciting time the world has ever known. But we have to make the right decisions. And now, for America and for Washington State, the right decisions are Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Maria Cantwell, Gary Locke, and our candidates for the Congress.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:30 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Westin Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to State Attorney General Christine O. Gregoire; Gov. Locke's wife, Mona Lee Locke; Mayor Paul Schell of Seattle; Paul Berendt, chair, Washington State Democratic Party; Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Rick Larson, candidate for Washington's Second Congressional District; Maria Cantwell, candidate for U.S. Senate from Washington; Comdr. Kirk S. Lippold, Commanding Officer, U.S.S. *Cole*; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; President Vojislav Kostunica of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Special Envoy Vice Marshal Cho Myong-nok, First Vice Chairman of the National Defense Commission of North Korea. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Dinner for Governor Gary Locke of Washington and Representative Jay Inslee in Seattle

October 14, 2000

Thank you very much. First of all, I'm delighted to be here, and I think I should begin by thanking Jay Inslee for explaining why it is impossible for me at this moment in my life's history to root for Seattle in this baseball conference. *[Laughter]* I think it's the only issue I've ever been on the opposite side of Washington State in 8 years. And I thank you for the dispensation. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Governor Locke and Mona for their friendship to Hillary and me. And I thank him for his extraordinary leadership. I can see by your presence here and the enthusiasm of the crowd we were before just a few moments ago that he's going to be reelected, and it's very, very important. I want you to stay

with him and help him and make sure. He deserves to be reelected.

Maybe it's just because I was a Governor a dozen years, and I don't think I ever would have gotten tired of it, but I know that nothing that we do in Washington, even if we make the right decisions, fully hits home in the lives of the American people in education, in health care, in the environment, in many other areas unless there is a good, strong Governor. And he is a good, strong Governor, and he is a good man, and I thank you for your support of him.

I want to thank Mayor Schell for being here, and Pam. I was laughing—you know, we're kind of enjoying being here tonight, he and I. The

last time I was here, we had a little more trouble when we were here. *[Laughter]* But I want to say to you, I still think it was important for Seattle to host that meeting. And in the future, since there is no turning back from tomorrow's world, people will look back on that meeting and what was said there in reaffirming our belief that it is possible to build a global economy with a human face, and they will say we were right, and Seattle will be credited with a difficult but profoundly important moment in the history of global relations. And so I hope you will always keep that in mind.

I want to thank Rick Larson for running for Congress. I want to thank your State party chair, and I want to thank my good buddy Ed Rendell for coming all the way from Philadelphia to be with us tonight and for his extraordinary leadership for the Democratic National Committee. I thank all your State officials for being here. And Deborah Senn, thank you especially for being here, and it's good to see you.

Oh, I'm supposed to make an important announcement. Tomorrow is the Lockes' sixth wedding anniversary. I can tell you, it's not as expensive, your 6th, as your 25th—*[laughter]*—but you still need to come up with something. *[Laughter]* We had a great week last—we had to actually schedule our 25th wedding anniversary, now that my wife's running for the Senate and I'm running around here trying to help other folks. *[Laughter]*

Let me say, too, I want to say to Jay and Trudi, I thank you for the service that you, Jay, rendered in Congress. Then, when you lost your seat, I thank you for the service you rendered to the administration. I thank you for having the courage to run again. And I thank you, Maria Cantwell, for having the courage to run again.

You know, this is a time of—a difficult time for me, personally, as you might imagine, because we lost those fine young sailors a couple of days ago on the ship in Yemen. And most of them were just good young people who wanted to make their way in life by serving their country. And they were just doing their duty. They bore no aggressive intentions toward anyone, and they were killed by someone who thought he could hurt America or break our desire to advance peace and freedom or thought somehow it's morally okay to kill people who disagree with you, no matter how defenseless they are and how unfair the fight. We started

bringing those kids home today, and we're going to have a big memorial for them Wednesday.

So I'd like to begin by just asking you tonight when you go home to say a prayer for their families and those that are wounded and those that are back there still on that ship. They saved the ship, and they're pretty traumatized, too.

But it's a humbling reminder that even in times of peace, freedom is not free. You will never know—I'm not even sure I know—how many conflicts have been prevented and how many lives have been saved, how many profound troubles avoided just because people like those young men and women that were on the U.S.S. *Cole* show up for duty every day. And I'm very grateful for them.

And of course, several of you mentioned to me tonight, a couple of people here at dinner and the people I've seen earlier in Washington, about the Middle East. And I'm going to leave tomorrow afternoon and fly to Egypt and attempt to get the parties together and try to get rid of the violence and get back to the path of peace.

It was ironic. When I was out at the airport earlier today, a man whom I had known years ago came up to me with a printed copy of a September 19th, 1993—of the speech I gave with Yitzhak Rabin and Chairman Arafat when we signed the Israeli-Palestinian accords, and he wanted me to sign it. I think it may have just been—it was pure coincidence. I think it was the only thing he had that I had given him that he could ask me to sign.

But I said, "Do you mind if I stop and read this?" I was standing in the airport. And so he gave it to me, and I read it again. And I thought about that beautiful late summer day and how we felt then and all the good things that have happened since then and how sad it all is now. And I was praying that somehow we might be able to recover, in the spirit of the leaders and the people, what was felt then in that happy moment.

I say that to make this point: In public life, there are issues, and there are issues. There are things that are important for votes, and then there are things that are important for life and for who we are as a people. Maria mentioned one earlier when she talked about Jay Inslee voting for the assault weapons ban and having to endure the wrath of people saying he was trying to take the guns away from the hunters and all that stuff.

The biggest problem the world has today is basically the oldest problem of human society. I know I'm here in the city of the future, this place that's most connected to the rest of the world and maybe the most wired city in the country. *[Laughter]* But you think about it. You think about what I spend my time doing: Northern Ireland; the Balkans; the work we did to try to end the North Korean nuclear program and get them to deal with each other again, which has borne such great success and gotten President Kim his much-deserved Nobel Prize—all these things. The tribal wars in Africa—Nelson Mandela asked me to fly the other day to Tanzania to try to help to secure the Burundi peace accord, because they killed a couple hundred thousand people in Burundi right before the Rwandan slaughter at the beginning of the last decade, and they're trying to get out of it and not repeat it again—and of course, the heartbreaking events of the last few days in the Middle East.

No matter how modern we get, we're still bedeviled by this old problem that we are—we don't understand people who are different than us. And it's easy when you don't fully understand people not to trust them, and then when you stop trusting them, it's easy to fear them and to misjudge them. And then it's easy for fear to turn into animosity and animosity to outright hatred, and hatred to the legitimization of violence, and then, because you have to live with the violence, you almost dehumanize the people just because they're different from you.

Now, not so very long ago, we had Hillary sponsoring an event at the White House on the role of the digital chip in the computer information technology revolution in the human genome project. And we had Vint Cerf there, and we had a guy representing the IT folks, and we had a guy named Eric Lander, who is a scientist from Harvard, talking about—who is an expert in the whole development of the human genome. And Lander was saying if it hadn't been for the digital chip, we never could have uncovered the—we could never have mapped the genome.

And so, we started asking questions. We said, "Well, what was the most surprising thing that you found?" And he said, "Well, we're more than 99.9 percent the same." And he said, what was even more interesting to him was that if you took like five different racial and ethnic

groups—you know, 100 Irish-Americans, 100 African-Americans, 100 Chinese-Americans, and so forth—that the genetic differences among individuals within the group would be greater than the differences in the profile from group to group.

Now, why am I saying all this, besides the fact that I've got to get my head in the right place for tomorrow? *[Laughter]* Because all of life—I'm old enough now to know this—all of life is like a continuing struggle, first of all, to understand some fundamental things about life, and second, what you've figured out to live by. We all have to organize life, you know, in a certain way. I can't not see Gary Locke as a Chinese-American. In fact, I think it's a good thing that I see him that way. It makes it more interesting. He's different from me. His roots are different. But when you organize reality into categories, you have to know where the validity of the categories stop. And we have to understand that nobody has perfect wisdom. And it's—when we get to believing that we're absolutely sure about those who are different from us, and our certainty takes on a negative turn, we can get in a world of hurt in a very short time.

And so I say that to make this point. What happens in the Middle East ultimately depends upon what they decide to do. All I can do is try to find the words and the moral and the physical support to help the path of peace and to make sure that we stand up for the right values and reaffirm our historic ties to Israel.

But over the long run, if we want to do good things around the world, we first have to be good at home. That's why I think the most important issues, even more important than the economic issues, are the issues that strengthen the ties that bind us, even as we respect our increasing diversity.

I was telling the other crowd—I gave more of a political speech at the early two events, but you know, it's 11 p.m. on my body clock—maybe I'm just too old to do it now. *[Laughter]* But what I was trying to say at these earlier meetings, I want to reiterate today.

I don't—I never liked all this personal attack business very much, but I love a good debate, because where there are honest differences, they ought to be stated clearly and argued out. And in this election season, whether we're talking about the Presidency or the governorship or this profoundly important Senate seat or the House

seats that you have at stake here, there are these huge differences.

Basically, we Democrats believe in a unifying vision of our public life. We believe, first of all, that everybody who is a responsible citizen ought to be part of our public life. So we're for hate crimes legislation and the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act," and their side isn't. Basically, we believe in stronger enforcement of the equal pay laws for women. We believe in things that bring us together.

Secondly, we believe that everybody that works hard ought to have a shot at the American dream. We think the people that served this dinner tonight ought to have the same chance to send their kids to college that those of us who could pay to eat here do. That's basically what we believe.

And thirdly, we don't mind fighting, but we don't think that we ought to be fighting over false choices. We think you can be pro-business and pro-labor, pro-growth and pro-environment. And we think that we've got to get this business about our racial, religious, gender, disability, sexual orientation, all these differences—we've got to figure out what they mean, respect our differences, and reaffirm the primacy of our common humanity. Now, that's what we believe.

I think—you know, the evidence is that it's worked out pretty well for America in the last 8 years. And so—and I feel a special debt to Maria Cantwell and to Jay Inslee, because they literally risked their whole political careers to do the right thing for America on turning the economy around and getting the crime rate down. They did.

I understand that Maria has now been attacked by a highly selective description of her vote for our economic plan. The truth is, almost all the tax increases in the economic plan were paid by 1.5 percent of the American people, and it was impossible to put together a package that would satisfy everybody. We also cut hundreds and hundreds of programs, and we cut taxes for 15 million Americans who were lower income working people with children.

But the main thing we had to do was to get ahold of the thing. We had to get the deficit down. When I took office, the deficit was \$290 billion; interest rates were high; growth was low. Do you know what the projected deficit for this year was? When I took office, \$455 billion. The debt of the country had quadrupled in the previous 12 years.

So we had to do something about it. And we didn't have a vote to spare—not one—because the other side wouldn't give us a vote—not one. So Maria's opponent was giving speeches like all the others, said, "This is the end of the world. This will end civilization as we know it if Bill Clinton's economic plan passes. It will lead to a recession. It will deepen the deficits. It will cost American jobs." Time has not been kind to their predictions. [Laughter] And I don't—so now, they have a \$230 billion surplus, and they want you to believe it just happened. [Laughter]

I thought the best line in Al Gore's first debate was when his opponent said, "I think the economy's done a lot more for Clinton-Gore than Clinton-Gore did for the economy. That's what I think." And that was a good line, you know. It was a pretty good line. [Laughter] I mean, you know, you've got to appreciate it when they hit you a good lick. [Laughter] So I said—and Al Gore said, "Yes, you know, the American people deserve most of the credit. But you know something? I think they were working pretty hard before we came in, too, and the results were very different."

So here's the first thing I want to tell you. This country has a chance that comes along once every 50 years or so to build the future of our dreams for our kids and our grandchildren. In my lifetime, we've never had, at the same time, so much economic prosperity, social progress, national self-confidence, with the absence of paralyzing domestic crisis or external threat.

Do we have problems? You bet we do. Could they get out of hand? There's no such thing as a life without danger. Nothing is totally predictable, but this is the best shape we've been in, in 50 years. And those of us that are—that know better will never forgive ourselves if we don't use this opportunity and make the most of it.

So what I would like to say to you is, there are huge differences between our candidates for President, Vice President, Senate, Congress, Governor, the whole 9 yards. If the people understand clearly what the differences are and what the consequences to them and their families and communities are, we win. Which is why, if you watch these debates, you will see that only one side wants you to know what the differences are. [Laughter] The other side wants to blur the differences. They tried clarity in

the early Gingrich years, and it didn't work out too well for them. *[Laughter]*

But I say that with all respect, actually, because their policies haven't changed all that much. So let me just mention two or three things, because here's what I'm asking you to do. Thank you for your money for these candidates. Thank you very much. They need it. They've got to be able to answer the other guy's attacks. They've got to be able to put their positive message on it. Thank you.

But there are a lot of undecided voters that basically don't know how to make heads or tails of these ads that are run and will never come to an event like this, that are your friends. Every one of you have got a lot of friends that have never been to an event like this, never will come to an event like this, can't imagine why you paid the money to come to an event like this. *[Laughter]* Is that right? Can't imagine why you paid the money to come to an event like this, but they will show up and vote. They will be there on election day, sure as the world, because they're good citizens and they want to be patriots.

And if they ask you why you came and why they ought to vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman or Maria Cantwell or Gary Locke or Jay Inslee, what are you going to say? That goes to this very point. You've got the chance to build the future of your dreams for your children.

Here's what I hope you will say, very briefly. Number one, on the economy, you want to keep the prosperity going by building on the direction of the last 8 years, or would you prefer to go back to the policy that was in place before?

Now, here's my argument. Al Gore says, "Vote for me, and I'll get us out of debt in 12 years, and we'll still have enough money to invest in education, health care, and the environment and defense. And I'll give you the tax cut I can afford, not the one that sounds the best, but the one we can afford that the most people need the most for educating their kids, for long-term care, for child care, for retirement savings. But I won't give you so much that we can't pay the debt down, because you all benefit from that. Because when we pay the debt down, it keeps interest rates lower, and that's the best tax cut we can give you. Low interest rates means lower home mortgages, lower business loans, lower car payments, lower college loan

payments, and a better stock market." Now, that's our shtick.

Their guys say, "This is your money, and the Democrats think Government knows best. We're going to give you 3 times as much back, and we're going to partially privatize Social Security so you can make some more money. And, oh by the way, yes, it does cost a trillion dollars to do that."

Now, you need to know, why does it cost a trillion dollars to do it? Because Social Security—Gore's program takes Social Security to 2054. The Republican program, it goes broke right now. In 2037—the Republican program makes it go broke sooner unless they put money into it. Why? Because if you're under 45, they're going to give you 2 percent of your payroll back, but if you're 55 or over—that includes me next year, though I hate it—*[laughter]*—they guarantee what you're going to get anyway.

So if you young people take money out and I get guaranteed what I'm supposed to get anyway, where is the money going to come from to give me what I've been guaranteed? This is their program. And they admitted in the first debate—to me, that was the story of the first debate, and I looked in vain for somebody to say this was significant—finally, they admitted, the nominee of the Republican Party admitted, "Yes, we'll take a trillion dollars out of the surplus." So if you take \$1.5 trillion for a tax cut and \$1 trillion to privatize Social Security and hundreds of billions of dollars of spending they promise, you're back in the deficit.

Now, most of you in this room would get a better deal under them, but a lot of you wouldn't. It's not true that Al Gore's plan doesn't help 50 million people. The basic math is that 32 million people wouldn't get a break under his plan, and 27 million wouldn't get a break under the Bush plan.

But it also is true that people in upper income groups, and some others—very few—would get more under the Bush plan. Most people get more under the Gore plan. But the main thing is, everybody gets more if their interest rates are lower. One plan pays off the debt, and the other one continues the debt. Now, this is a big choice.

People ask me all the time, now that I'm almost a has-been, they come to me and say—they say—*[laughter]*—"You know, you had such a brilliant economic team. You know, Bob Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen and all those people, they're

so brilliant. What great new idea did you bring to Washington?" And I always say, "Arithmetic." [Laughter] "We brought arithmetic to Washington. And lo and behold, it worked as well there as it did in my first grade class." [Laughter]

Now, look, there's a lot of fancy—we decided to bail out Mexico. We were for the right telecommunications law, and it was pro-competition, and a lot of you were benefited from that because we did the right thing for America. But we started with arithmetic.

Now, so you've got one crowd that says, "Okay, let's stick with arithmetic, but keep changing." That's Gore, Lieberman, Maria, Jay, Gary. Then you've got the other crowd that says, "They've built up such a big surplus. Let us try it our way again and see if it works better the second time." [Laughter]

And I kind of admire them, you know, because evidence never fazes them. [Laughter] You've got to kind of admire that, you know. I mean, they know what they believe, and they just go right with it. [Laughter] But we're all having a good time here, but I don't think everybody in Washington State understands this difference. Do you? But this is clear. If you can come to this dinner tonight, you can sure explain to people how lower interest rates are good for them and paying off the debt's good for them and not giving away tax money before it's there is good for them.

There's something else. When you read all these skeptical press analyses saying, "Well, maybe Gore's plan's too much, just like Bush's. Maybe there are pox on both their houses." Let me tell you something. People that write that have never practiced politics. What do I mean by that?

You can say, "I would like to spend this amount of money on education over the next 10 years. But if the money doesn't come in, I won't spend it." But if you cut taxes today, it's gone. That's the difference. And if you privatize the Social Security system, you've got to spend the trillion to make the guarantees to the people that you promised are going to get their benefits. That's a breathtaking, practical difference.

So you need to tell people this. If you like where you are now compared to where you were 8 years ago and you want to keep it going in the same direction, you've got to vote for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Maria Cantwell, Jay Ins-

lee, and Gary Locke, period. That's the economic deal. It's clear.

Now, the same thing is true in health care. We're for a real Patients' Bill of Rights, and they're not. And they're not because the health insurers don't want it, because they don't want to ever be sued and they think it will raise the cost of health care. Well, that's a serious concern. It's a legitimate concern.

The problem is, if you're stuck in an HMO and your doctor wants you to see a specialist and you don't have a lot of time to fool around with it, you need to be able to do it. If you work for some company and your company changes providers and you're in the middle of a chemotherapy treatment or you're 6 months pregnant, you don't want to have to change your doctor before you have your baby or you finish your treatment. If you get hit in the middle of a big city by a car, you don't want to have to pass three hospitals before you find an emergency room that's covered by your plan. You want to go to the nearest emergency room.

Now, I did all this for people under Federal insurance. You know what it cost us? A buck a premium a month. Do you know what the Republicans say it would cost to do it nationally? Even them—and keep in mind, they're going with the other crowd—even they admit it's less than \$2 a month.

Now, I'd spend \$23 a year to know that you could go to the nearest emergency room if you get hit coming out here. And I think most Americans would. It's a big difference. We're for a Medicare prescription drug plan that covers all seniors that need it. They say that we're trying to force—have you seen these ads saying they're trying to force people into a Government HMO? That's the biggest load of hokey I ever heard in my life. [Laughter] Medicare is not an HMO. Medicare is a fee-for-service plan with a 1.5 percent administrative overhead, less than any HMO in the world. And if you want to go into an HMO because they give you more benefits, you can do it, but you don't have to. It's totally your choice.

Now, did you ever wonder what the real deal is on this prescription drug fight we're having in Washington? I mean, don't you think it's funny that the drug companies who—the Republicans can't be for our plan, because the drug companies won't let them. But don't you think it's funny that they won't let them? Did you ever meet any business that didn't want

more customers? Did you ever meet a politician that didn't want more votes? *[Laughter]*

This is a serious issue. I just want to tell you. But it shows you what our values are. This is very important. The drug companies have a legitimate issue, but they're going about it in the wrong way. We're fortunate to have these pharmaceutical companies in our country. They develop lifesaving drugs. They lengthen life. They improve the quality of life. And parenthetically, they give employment to tens of thousands of people, and they're darn good jobs. And it's good they're here.

But it costs a lot of money to develop the drugs, and they spend a lot of money advertising it. And they want to sell the drugs worldwide, and every other country they want to sell them in has price controls, so they've got to get 100 percent of the money for their worldwide sales for developing the drugs and advertising them from Americans. Then, once they get the money from us, they can sell the drugs everywhere else under price controls and do just fine, because it's just the extra cost to make another pill or something.

Now, what they're worried about is, if we let all the seniors in the country that need medicine they can't afford buy into our plan, they're afraid that Medicare will have such market power—not price controls, market power—we can get Americans drugs made in America almost as cheap as they can buy them made in Canada—I mean, if they were in Canada, made in America. That's what they're worried about.

Now look, you never hear this in the debate. Everybody always acts like black and white, and they use slogans, and they don't explain to you. This is a legitimate problem. If their profit margins get squeezed too much, then they won't have the money to develop the drugs and advertise them that they want. It's a legitimate problem. But their answer to the problem is to leave half the seniors who can't afford medicine without the medicine? That's not America.

Look, this is a big industry. They've got lots of money. They've got a lot of influence in Washington. I say, the Democrats say, "Let's take care of the people who need the medicine. Then we'll find a way to take care of their problem." We won't run off and leave them. We're not going to let the drug companies go broke. We're glad they're here. We love what they do. But the answer to their problem, surely to goodness, is not saying to half the seniors

in the country, "You can't have the medicines that you need."

Now, look, it's like we could go through this—the same thing is true on education. Both candidates for President say they're for accountability and standards, and that's true. You know, I've worked on this for over 20 years. I think our accountability system is better than theirs. We could argue that out, but I won't. Let's just posit they're both for accountability, and that's good. They say they're for accountability, block grants, and vouchers, and we're trying to micromanage education. That's what they say.

Here's my answer. We're for accountability-plus: plus at least 100,000 teachers that are well-trained to make classes smaller in the early grades, plus the funds to help districts build or modernize 6,000 schools and repair another 5,000 a year for 5 years, since you've got a massive, massive school facilities crisis in America. We're for preschool and after-school and summer school for all the kids who need it. And we think people ought to get a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition. We think, in other words, we should give people the tools they need to succeed in an accountability environment. And our major accountability is, identify failing schools, turn them around, shut them down, or put them under new management. That's what works best. I can tell you; I've been fooling with this for 20 years. That's what works best.

Now, they say we're trying to micromanage the schools. "Why not trust the States? Don't you trust Gary Locke?" they say. And I say, "Yeah, I do. But there is now indisputable research about what works. And the teachers and the educators have been telling us about this for years."

We only have 7 percent of the total school budget coming from the Federal Government. We have got to put this money where it will have the biggest impact. And when they tell you we're micromanaging the schools, that's just not true. Under this administration, we have cut regulations on States and school districts by two-thirds below what they were under the previous Republican administration. All we're doing is sending the money where it will do the most good. So if you want accountability-plus, instead of accountability-minus, you've got to be for us.

So let's go over it. So if somebody asks you tomorrow why were you here, can you give

them the economic answer? Can you give them the health care answer? Can you give them the education answer? Can you say the Democrats are for hate crimes; they're for employment non-discrimination; they're for stronger enforcement of the equal pay laws for women? Gore is for the right to choose, and his opponent's not, and that could have a big impact. Can you tell them that?

The environment: This is one area where, by the way, there has been surprising clarity, just not publicity. Somehow, the people writing about it don't think it's important. I think it's real important. The Vice President has pledged to build on the environmental record of this administration. They say that if you vote for them, they will repeal my order setting aside 43 million roadless acres in the national forest. That was on the debate last time. I can't believe nobody—apparently, people didn't think it was very important. I keep reading for something meaningful, somebody to say something about that.

The Audubon Society said that was the most important conservation move in the last 40 years, and they're going to undo it. They're going to undo it. They say they want to reexamine all the national monuments I've set aside. They said that the air pollution standards we've set are too tough; they're hurting business. I'll tell you what, if I tried to hurt business with my environmental policy, I did a poor job. [Laughter] I did a poor job.

But this is a huge difference. And of course, there are massive differences on crime. And it's not just on guns. Let's talk about the non-gun issues. In the crime bill of '94 that we were talking about, that did ban assault weapons—a ban, by the way, that will be reauthorized or not in the next President's term—we put 100,000 police on the street. We got more than 100,000, under budget, ahead of time, so we're now getting funding for another 50,000. And they're keeping crimes from happening. It's not just catching criminals quicker. They're keeping crimes from happening. They're doing all this community policing.

Now, their nominee has a commitment, public commitment, to abolish that program on the theory that the Federal Government has got no business working on safe streets. The first time I met Ed Rendell in Philadelphia, he took me into a neighborhood where he used some Federal money that the Democratic Congress and

the previous Republican administration had given him to clean up the street.

Now, they're to the right of that. They said they're going to get rid of the COPS program. So you've got a choice here. We've got the lowest crime rate in 26 years, the lowest murder rate in 33 years. You can say, "I don't think this policy had anything to do with that," if you want to gamble with that and vote for them.

You heard them say in the debate—the debate made clear that our side is for the 3-day waiting period, including at gun shows, to do background checks, and their side's not.

Now, I listened to all this in '94. It broke my heart. I don't know how many House Members that the NRA beat in '94, but a bunch of them here in Washington. We took the awfulest licking here we did than any State in the country, and the NRA had a lot to do with it. I take my hat off to them. They succeeded in scaring the living daylights out of a bunch of voters. They told them all we were coming after their guns.

They did that in New Hampshire, too. I went back in New Hampshire, and I got 200 hunters together, and I said, "I want to tell you something. You beat a Congressman here 2 years ago because he voted with me for the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban, and if any of you missed a day or an hour in the deer woods, I want you to vote against me this time. But if you didn't, they didn't tell you the truth, and you ought to get even." And I say that again here.

Nobody, none of these Washington hunters or sportsmen have missed a minute in any hunting season or a minute in any sport shooting contest. They have been terrified and scared and misled. All we ever tried to do was to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children and take basic precautionary measures.

Now, this is a big deal. This is a big deal. So—now, look—[applause]. Wait a minute. Thank you. Wait a minute. I'm done. You don't have to sit down. I'm done. [Laughter]

When you go home tonight, you give yourself a test. [Laughter] How much of this can you say? And promise yourself that every friend you see between now and election that you know good and well would never come to a deal like this, you will share some of this with them. I promise you, if people understand what the differences are and what the consequences are,

our crowd will do fine, because the American people nearly always get it right.

And the last thing I want to say is this. Al Gore often says in his speeches, "You ain't seen nothin' yet." And I guess maybe it sounds like a political statement. But as you know, I'm not running for anything, and I believe that. [Laughter] I believe that. It takes a long time to turn a country around. And we've been working on turning this country around, pulling it together, moving it forward. But you just think of that. You think about babies being born sometime the next 10 years with the life expectancy of 90 years.

Most of you are going to live to see what's in the black holes in outer space and what's in the deepest depths of the ocean. We're just that close to cracking the chemical barriers to converting biomass into fuel in an efficient way. Right now, to make ethanol or any biofuel, it takes 7 gallons of gasoline to make 8 gallons of fuel. If we get just a little more chemical progress, we'll be able to take 1 gallon of gasoline and make 8 gallons of biofuel, and when that happens, we'll all be getting 500 miles to the gallon. You can forget about worrying about that. [Laughter]

Look, all of this stuff is out there, which is why, by the way, these racial and ethnic and other fights and religious fights are so maddening, because it will make it possible for children in the poorest places in the world to participate in a common future. It's all out there. But we've got to make the right decision. And these elections are going to be close. We're going to be outspent. But if we have clarity, if the people know—understand what the dif-

ferences are and what the consequences are, we will do fine.

So I'm putting it on you. You've been real nice to me tonight, and I shouldn't do this, but I'm putting it on you. Every day between now and the election, you will see somebody that will never come to one of these deals, and you can turn them, and you can get them to come. And I promise you, you will never have another election where it will matter more. So do what you can, and we'll have a great celebration.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:05 p.m. in the Cascade Room at the Westin Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Governor Locke's wife, Mona Lee Locke; Mayor Paul Schell of Seattle and his wife, Pam; Deborah Senn, candidate for U.S. Senate in Washington; Rick Larson, candidate for Washington's Second Congressional District; Paul Berendt, chair, Washington State Democratic Party; Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Representative Inslee's wife, Trudi; Maria Cantwell, candidate for U.S. Senate from Washington; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; Vinton G. Cerf, senior vice president of Internet architecture and technology, MCI WorldCom; Eric Lander, director, Whitehead/MIT Center for Genome Research; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; and former Secretaries of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen. Representative Inslee was a candidate for reelection in Washington's First Congressional District.

Statement on the 1999 Uniform Crime Report

October 15, 2000

The final 1999 Uniform Crime Report released today by the FBI confirms that for the 8th year in a row—and for the longest period ever recorded—crime has fallen all across the country, improving the quality of life and safety of American families. The report shows that overall crime, as well as violent and property crime, fell more than 7 percent from 1998 and

1999. Crime is down in communities of every region and size across the nation.

Crime rates rose steadily through much of the 1980's. Since Vice President Gore and I took office, our Nation has come together to reverse those trends. Our administration focused on giving communities more and better tools to improve public safety, including 100,000 more